

FAO Commerce Committee,

I am writing to urge you to vote NO on HB 5263.

Rabbits are very fearful animals who do not cope well in a farming environment. The mortality rate is usually very high. Rabbits also experience extreme stress at slaughter.

Shockingly, they are exempt from the Humane Slaughter Act 85-765 which means they may be fully conscious while being slaughtered. They do not need to be stunned before slaughter and an inspector is not required to be present, leaving them vulnerable to the worst kind of abuse with no requirement for documentation or supervision.

Rabbit farms will be a breeding ground for disease, with so many animals cramped into small cages. The highly contagious Rabbit Viral Hemorrhagic Disease will thrive in such conditions, and this could lead to the decimation of wild and domestic rabbits in the area.

There is very little demand for rabbit meat, most people are repulsed at the thought of consuming the third most popular household pet. More and more people are now avoiding animal products and turn to a plant based diet. Whole Foods and other specialty stores have long stopped selling rabbit meat after concluding there was no market for sales.

There is simply no need for such a backwards step to allow intensive rabbit farming and slaughter in this day and age.

Yours Sincerely

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